

LES GOVE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING NOTES - JUNE 4, 2008



On June 4, 2008 the City of Auburn Mayor and City staff met with residents of the Les Gove Neighborhood at the Parks, Arts & Recreation Building, 910 9th Street SE, regarding a new sewer project and sidewalk improvements.

Staff in Attendance: MAYOR PETE LEWIS, DUANNA RICHARDS, KIRSTEN REYNOLDS, LESLIE LEHNHOFF, LEAH DUNSDON, BOB WUOTILA, JEFF DIXON, MIKE DUNBAR, STEVE STOCKER, LAURA PHILPOT, DENNIS DOWDY AND HEATHER BARTLETT.

Community Members in Attendance: TROY L HALE, DAN WESTERBUR, ANGELIQUE MOSER, NATHAN OLSON & SHELBY WHITACRE, ROSE MAKAI, STEVEN MOKEI, JAMES & MELISSA GREER, LAIRD CHAMBERS, MEGAN HUTTON, JEANNETTE BURNS, REUBEU PIELLE, JEREMY JACOBS, JEANNE STOVER, DAVE & KATY COOLEY, DAVE HASTIN, JODI HILL, ARNIE POST, LAURA CAIN, JOSEPH & PATRICIA SCHWITZKE, JEFF KING & KAREN PILARC, JANICE NELSON, JOHN VALDEZ, BYRDENA HAMMOND, IONEL CEREAN, KIM FRANK, LEO VICKERS, ROBERT HILL, ARNOLD & SHARON TIFFANY, MATTHEW T. CAIN, HELENA VAEREWYCK, KRISTIN & JIM WELLS, TAI X, DENNIS SHELL, GLADYS PAULUS, TRUDY GINTHER, NEIL & BARBARA TAYLOR, KEVIN PLACHY, JASON PERDELIMITZ, LINDA KAVRAN, DANIEL MAHAK.

Welcome and Introductions:

Community Services Manager Duanna Richards opened the meeting with a brief outline of the meeting and introductions of City staff and Mayor Pete Lewis. Mayor Lewis facilitated the audience participation portion of the meeting opening the floor to anyone wanting to discuss issues other than the Les Gove Neighborhood Improvement Project. A few opening comments included, but were not limited to:

- 911 – Mayor Lewis informed the residents that Auburn shares ownership of the 911 system, calls go into a dispatch center so residents shouldn't worry about tying up the phone line when making non-emergency calls. Residents were advised to call 911 for any emergency or non-emergency issue such as street lights out, stop lights out, missing stop signs, fireworks, loose dogs, sewer backups, water leaks, etc.
- Train late at night being loud. They lock the train cars by banging them together and because they are Burlington Northern there is nothing the City can do.

Public Works:

Stop Signs, Traffic Lights and Cameras –

- Dangerous for kids to cross street at 5th and F Street.
- Auburn Way South crosswalk – residents from this neighborhood need to officially put a request in with the City of Auburn and the State must agree to it. If the neighborhood as a whole came together on this issue it would be helpful.
- Stop sign at 7th Street – it was reported people run the stop sign at 7th and K; a couple of residents asked to have the street closed off.
- Photo Safe cameras – traffic lights where these cameras were installed are on the same timing as all other traffic lights, the City has not shortened the time period between yellow and red. When the cameras were first installed 1,000 tickets were issued each month. City Council approved the lowest ticket charge possible; the goal was to stop the accidents not increase revenue. Mayor Lewis explained this has stopped many of the accidents. Dollars collected from these tickets go towards traffic calming. Photo Safe gets the first \$4,900 each month.

Streets -

- Traffic on Auburn Way South – there were concerns about the amount of increasing traffic heading towards the Muckleshoot Indian Casino and Amphitheater. Mayor Lewis talked about the partnership Auburn has with the State and Indian Tribe. Eventually the road will be widened and another on-ramp to Hwy. 18 will be installed. There is also an agreement in place to get the traffic lights synced.

Sidewalks, Speed bumps, Curbs and Parking –

- Sidewalks – City Council established a fund some years ago to pay up to 50% of the cost of sidewalks if the majority of property owners formed a Local Improvement District (LID) and agree to have the sidewalks installed on their streets. Since sidewalks are the responsibility of the homeowners in the neighborhood, the City of Auburn now requires them on all new developments, but offers the option of an LID to pay for half in areas where owners originally chose not to put in sidewalks.
- A few residents expressed concern about their yards and landscaping being ruined if sidewalks were installed.
- ADA wheel chair ramps at corners - there was concern that all new sidewalks need to have the ADA accessibility throughout the city, including neighborhoods.
- F Street Bridge – both sides need to be paved, not just one side.
- Cement block dividers on F and Auburn Way South - The State mandated this traffic improvement to prevent accidents; there were many low impact accidents happening here.

Speeding –

- Speeding issues were reported around F Street and D Street.
- Traffic circle causes speeding – residents reported there is more speeding at 7th and F Street because of the traffic circle. Mayor talked about this project and explained the neighborhood asked for this to be installed on a temporary basis.

Utilities -

- More lighting installed - a request was made to have more lighting at: F Street, H Street, around Les Gove Park and in the alleyways. Mayor talked about the importance of having the right type of lighting.
- Littering problem – residents asked to have trash cans installed along 4th and F Street, near Burger King and the High School.

Police:

- Police - calls are prioritized with threat to life or property first. There are 114 dedicated officers currently on staff and at least six cars to cover the entire city during any one shift.
- Panhandling at the Highway – the ramps are owned by the State. Auburn Police struggle with this, but have creative ways to deal with this issue.
- Suspicious youth – reports of youth loitering in the neighborhood. There was a curfew law passed seven years ago which states they cannot be out past 10pm on the weekdays. Mayor advised neighbors to call 911 to document any suspicious activity.

Graffiti:

- It was suggested if there were more lights kids wouldn't tag the neighborhood. Mayor Lewis talked about Council passing an Ordinance that requires kids to be 18 to purchase spray paint.

Parks:

- Improvements in Les Gove Park – there will be a new Community Center building which is currently in the planning stages; the architect has been hired and construction will begin in early 2009. After the Community Center is built, Parks staff will move their offices to the new building and the old building will become a “TWEEN Center”.
- Skate park – there were a few residents that wanted to see another skate park added to Les Gove Park. Mayor Lewis talked about the process the City went through before the old one was removed.

Neighborhood Point of Contact:

- Community Services Manager Duanna Richards invited residents to call or e-mail the Community Services Team if they have any questions or concerns and aren't sure who to call at the City. Contact information for the Community Services Division is: 253-931-3099 or drichards@auburnwa.gov.
- Neighbors from 8th and K Street spoke about starting a block watch group. If residents are interested in joining the neighborhood block watch or would like to keep informed please contact James Greer at:

James Greer
721 K Street SE
Auburn WA, 98002
253-351-2944
jamesgreerdrywall@yahoo.com

Neighborhood Projects:

- The meeting was turned over to Leah Dunsdon, Project Engineer; Leah talked about the timeline and costs for the work needing to be done on the water lines, sewer lines, pavement patching and utility improvements. The City is planning to pay \$5.8 million for all the identified improvements.
- Transportation Manager, Laura Philpot talked about having sidewalks installed in the neighborhood through forming a Local Improvement District (LID). Home owners interested in having improvements done must agree to form an LID, then the cost would be split 50/50 by City and property owners; this is financed through the City at a low interest rate and it must be paid off over a ten year period.